

February 1993

## Bet You Missed It/ Press Clippings, In the News

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### Recommended Citation

Bazirjian, Rosann (1993) "Bet You Missed It/ Press Clippings, In the News," *Against the Grain*: Vol. 5: Iss. 1, Article 27.  
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.7771/2380-176X.1328>

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# Bet You Missed It



**Press Clippings — In the News — Carefully Selected by Your Crack Staff of News Sleuths**  
Column Editor, **Rosann Bazirjian** (Syracuse University)

## Smart Wires On the Line

by **Rachel Miller**

(University of Kansas)

In their competition with local phone companies to become full service telecommunication providers, cable TV companies are ahead in the race to put smart wires in U.S. households. Phone companies have more hookups, but their narrow-band twisted-pair copper wires normally hold only voice and data and their capacity cannot compare with cable's coax broadband as conduits for transmitting huge amounts of data at enormous speed. Cable companies are also installing fiber-optic cable more rapidly than phone companies

are. Through their fiber and coax lines, cable systems can become suppliers of a wide range of broadband services. They are stepping into the wireless phone business and also becoming a force in computer networks because of the wider bandwidth requirements for transmission of video and graphics. Phone companies will not be able to achieve this as long as they depend on copper twisted-pair wires.

See — "Cable's Secret Weapon" by George Gilder in *Forbes*, vol. 149 (8) (April 13, 1992), pp. 80-84.

## Cable Versus Phone Companies Heats Up

by **Rachel Miller**

(University of Kansas)

The seven Bell companies are trying to cut costs and reinvent themselves in the face of regulatory changes and new technology. The long distance access charges that subsidize local residential rates have been reduced by the FCC, and technology now permits high-volume long distance users to bypass access charges altogether. Some large business and government customers have switched to private phone networks. The Bell networks are still overwhelmingly copper-wire based. Al-

though data compression technology can make copper wires usable longer, they still cannot compete with the capacity of coax cable hookups. To try to survive, the phone companies are marketing their services to corporations, preparing to compete with cable companies on their service records, and exporting their expertise overseas.

See — "What Should We Be?" by Gary Slutsker in *Forbes*, vol. 150 (7) (September 28, 1992), pp. 132-138.

## The Virtual Office

by **Rachel Miller**

(University of Kansas)

Advances in telecommunications and computing are causing companies to migrate out of the cities into the hinterlands. This trend is coinciding with the disintegration of the classic hierarchical megacorporation and the end of entire middle layers of management. Companies are decentralizing and re-forming themselves around their information networks, linking employees and customers with satellites, laptop computers, fax machines, and such new developments as affordable ISDN video-phone connections. The employee-employer relationship is changing too, especially in white-collar and

professional sectors, and a contingent workforce is emerging. As more employees work in their homes, more service companies are becoming "virtual employers" with no centralized location. The losers in this telemigration will be the large cities, and the winners will be the rural suburban areas, along with suppliers of e-mail, telecommuting software, and teleconferencing and home office equipment.

See — "The Virtual Workplace" by David C. Churbuck and Jeffrey S. Young in *Forbes*, vol. 150 (12) (November 23, 1992), pp. 184-190.

## The Pen is Mightier Than the Mouse: If Not Now, Soon

by **Bobbi Gwilt**

(Syracuse University)

Pens, predicted as one of the next evolutionary steps in computer keyboards, have not yet fulfilled their promise. Pen technology allows users to write directly onto screens. Problems have occurred with the digitizers that process the writing, the microprocessors and the operating systems. According to a report in *Newsweek*, the few pen computers reaching the market have met with criticism. One company, Momenta International, experienced problems as its first PC with a keyboard and pen was too heavy, and had a short battery life and a dim screen.

But, in spite of these problems, over 40,000 pen machines have been sold.

Most of these sales are in the area of portable communications and computing, to companies automating the work of their clipboard carrying workers, such as UPS drivers. Some industry analysts are predicting that "by the end of the decade, more than half the computers shipped will have pens".

As the number of repetitive strain injuries increases, the development of alternative human/computer communication techniques will receive greater attention. The pen, the mouse and voice activated computers are potential answers to this problem.

See — "The Revolution That Wasn't" in *Newsweek*, October 19, 1992, p. 51



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**Music Muze**  
by **Bobbi Gwilt**  
(Syracuse University)

The latest tool for verifying citations of sound recordings could be MUZE, a computer database found in record stores. MUZE presently is replacing traditional record catalogs in 60 stores and will soon be found in 200 stores nationwide.

The MUZE database cites 80,000 compact discs and cassettes, covering a wide range of music. Retrieval is possible by artist, album title, song title, with classical mu-

sic accessed in greater detail by soloist, composer and conductor. Key word searching is also available.

Cost for this reference source is \$6,000 for the computer hardware and about \$100 for each monthly update. For customers, the service is free. On your next mall visit, look for MUZE.

See — "But Can You Dance To It" in *Newsweek* September 14, 1992.

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**Is It All In the Family**  
by **Stephanie Bazirjian**  
(Texas State Library and Archives)

Many times, supervisors encourage a family environment in the office to fill a personal need. Unfortunately, it is accompanied by all the familiar behaviors. But the facts are, this is not your family and the office is not your home.

Some of the common problems that occur are behaviors that one might use with a spouse, lover, child or sibling. For example, when the age of employees is close, it may be that a sibling pattern emerges. Behaviors might include tattling and phrases such as "They always get everything", "she's always picking on me", or "now they're really going to get it".

A supervisor must be careful not to relate to his/her staff as a parent. The phenomenon of transference happens not only in therapy but in the workplace. Oftentimes, an employee projects qualities of a parent onto the supervisor. Though understanding and compassion are necessary when working with people, a su-

pervisor needs to be able to maintain a certain balance. He/she should never violate personal boundaries, encourage dependency, invade privacy or compromise personal autonomy.

Certain supervisors encourage dependency. To avoid becoming the problem, assess how you communicate with your staff. A manager must respect both emotional and physical boundaries of workers, respecting individual differences and addressing them as adults. A few ways to avoid some of these situations? don't encourage togetherness; avoid "triangle" relationships; deal one-on-one with employees; react to situations, not feelings; and don't share or solicit too much private information. In short, if you treat your staff too intimately, they will feel they're risen to family status and will respond accordingly.

See — "This Is Not Your Family" by J.R. Waddell in *Supervisory Management*, vol. 37 (10) (October, 1992), p. 4.

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**Computer Budgeting:  
The Bits and Bytes of Success,**  
by **Phil Dankert**  
(Cornell University)

According to a recently released EDUCOM/University of Southern California survey (the third annual) of computing officials on 928 campuses, almost two-thirds responded that their institutions were either cutting back or even spending no more on computing this year than last.

**Brian L. Hawkins**, Vice-President for Academic Planning and Administration at Brown University, noted that the budget situation in academic computing is "the most rugged that anyone has seen in well over a decade."

The problem is exacerbated by several factors, perhaps the most telling being the ability to keep up with the demands for help from ever growing numbers of faculty and students who use computers. The survey also showed that more than 42 percent of faculty mem-

bers and one-fifth of this country's college students now own computers. For private universities the percentages were 62.2 for faculty and 38.2 for students.

Among the other concerns raised in this survey were: 1) That only "45 percent of the higher-education institutions expected to provide support services to encourage faculty members to create software that could be used in their classes", and, 2) That higher education is not doing a good job of making computers available to disabled users.

See — "36% of Colleges and Universities Plan to Increase Spending on Computing; 31% Expect Declines" by Thomas J. DeLoughry in *Chronicle of Higher Education* November 4, 1992, p. A17-A18.

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**Compaq at Compact Prices**  
by **Rosann Bazirjian**  
(Syracuse University)

This article discusses the changes which have come about with Compaq Computer since the installation of the new CEO, **Eckhard Pfeiffer**. Mr. Pfeiffer altered the way Compaq thinks, making marketing and the development of less expensive computers more important than technology. In the year since Mr. Pfeiffer has taken over, Compaq's annual advertising budget has gone up by 60%, and the number of engineers has gone down by 20%. Compaq has worked to resolve what they felt to be the problems that the company had been facing, namely the high cost of design, high product cost,

premium pricing, a very narrow distribution focus, high overhead and expense and poor marketing communication. In addition, they have developed new low-cost PC's such as the ProLinea desktop and Contura notebooks. So far, Pfeiffer's strategy has brought terrific results for Compaq. To date, they have surpassed IBM to become No. 1 in Britain. They hope that their new way of thinking will continue to bring them success.

See — "The Revolution at Compaq Computer" by David Kirkpatrick in *Fortune* December 14, 1992, pp. 80-88.



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**The Art of Delegation**  
by **Stephanie Bazirjian**  
(Texas State Library and Archives)

Delegation involves following an orderly, thoughtful selection process whereby you choose those whose skills are most compatible with the task or those who would benefit the most from the experience.

First, analyze the task and the candidates and don't underestimate the importance of the first step. Consider the following questions: How close is the deadline? — you'll need to choose a conscientious time-oriented worker. How will the job help the person grow? — Consider degree of challenge, initiative, judgment or discretion required. Innovative assignments call for dreamers who thrive on creativity

but dislike responsibility. Standard "grunt work" is best suited for detail-minded, systematic workers.

This article continues to go on offering supervisors advice on how to select the correct worker for a specific assignment. The author finally cautions the supervisor to always explain the final reasons for your choice to the runners-up to minimize claims of favoritism or discrimination.

See — "Do You Choose the Best Person for the Task?" by Joseph T. Straub in *Supervisory Management*, vol. 37 (10) (October, 1992) p. 7.

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**Decoding the Handwritten Word**  
by **Sarah Tusa**  
(Lamar University)

Information technology researchers at both SRI International and AT&T Bell Laboratories hope to teach computers to read human handwriting with greater speed and accuracy by the latter years of this decade. The technology is already in use to varying degrees by American Express and the U.S. Postal Service, but in its present state, the performance of this technology is somewhat limited. The Postal Service is seeking a success rate of 50% for address recognition.

Two approaches to improving the speed and accuracy of digital decoding are in the works. One approach is to "place a character in context", thereby narrowing the field of potential (mis)interpretations. Researchers are borrowing

from the pattern-recognition technology of smart bombs. The other approach, known as the "neural network" method, seeks to create an expandable store of parameters for each character. This method is based on a series of algorithms that "breaks letters or digits into parts".

Another extant system is comprised of the pen-based computers, but these neither have nor require the speed or accuracy needed by the Postal Service. The article aptly compares the goal of handwriting recognition machines to the skills of pharmacists who must decipher "the most illegible scrawls accurately and quickly".

See — "Teaching Computers to Tell a 'G' from a 'C'", in *Business Week*, no. 3296 (December 7, 1992), pp. 118-119.

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**The Science of Journal Costs**  
by **Twyla Racz**  
(Eastern Michigan University)

The Advisory Panel for Scientific Publications, organized to assist in the development of criteria to measure the cost-effectiveness of scientific journals, questions the methods libraries have used to control subscription costs stating that the needs of the science community are ignored and that they should be involved

in library funding and management. The Panel offers three sets of recommendations that would address its concerns.

See — "The Cost-Effectiveness of Science Journals" by the Advisory Panel for Scientific Publications in *Publishing Research Quarterly*, Fall, 1992, pp. 72-91.

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**Who You Gonna Call?: Plagiarism Busters**  
by **Pamela Rose**  
(State University of New York at Buffalo)

The latest controversial detective device developed by NIH fraudbusters Ned Feder and Walter Stewart is a "plagiarism detector" which has now been used at the University of Illinois both to confirm and deny plagiarism allegations. The device is expected to be used in a court case involving W.B. Saunders and the heirs to John Marquise Converse

over Converse's 1990 edition, seven-volume plastic surgery text which has been delayed until June 1993. The article does not describe the machine, except to note that it scans and compares both the original and revised texts.

See — "Sciencescope" by Richard Stone in *Science*, November 13, 1992, vol. 258, no. 5085.

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**Book Returns Sour Market**  
by **Twyla Racz**  
(Eastern Michigan University)

During the relatively stable business period 1984 through 1989 U.S. book sales grew 85.82% exceeding the 15.24% inflation rate. Unfortunately, however, during this same period there was a total of \$7.88 billion in domestic book returns. The college market was second in total book returns, \$1.36 billion (17.3%) following mass market paperback returns of \$2.9 billion (36.83%), and adult hardback totals of \$1.25 billion (15.9%). The author lists suggestions of past

years that were proposed to stay massive returns, but recommends that publishers adopt Philip Kotler's "marketing management" approach. This would entail book publishers conducting original research on the publishing industry. Either the industry takes steps to stem the flood of returns or some of them may cease to exist.

See — "U.S. Book Returns, 1984-1989" by Albert N. Greco in *Publishing Research Quarterly*, Fall, 1992, pp. 46-61.



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**Lingua Franca: a Language of Its Own**  
by **Bill Mingin**

(Lange and Springer Scientific Booksellers)

For academic librarians, nearly all of *Lingua Franca* will be of interest, and it's fun to read — forthright, contentious, often witty. In each issue is a listing of books recommended by experts; this issue being in the field of adolescence. The regular feature "Inside Publishing" notes several books of interest, among them *Investigating Sex: Surrealist Research 1928-32*, transcripts of uninhibited discussions among several well-known surrealists. The regular feature "Research File: Documents in Search of Scholars" describes the State Historical Society of Wisconsin Newspapers and Periodicals Unit. For more than a century the Unit has collected the literature of "American cultists, hobbyists, and political activists",

much of it "deeply and unapologetically weird". The library has more than 2.3 million items in the field of American history, and a manuscript collection from the civil rights and reform movements of the 1960's. Its collection of nearly 10,000 general interest newspapers is second only to the Library of Congress. It also holds nearly 9,000 current periodicals. Since 1980, the library has subscribed to all publications of the U.S. military, and since 1989, to American embassy and consulate newsletters. **Jim Danky**, newspapers and periodical librarian, notes that most of their material won't even be useful in his lifetime.

See — *Lingua Franca*, vol. 2 (6) (September-October, 1992)

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**Good Book Is Good Business,**  
by **Bobbi Gwilt**

(Syracuse University)

**Thomas Nelson**, a leading publisher for religious and inspirational books, has announced its plans to acquire Word Inc., a publishing and gospel record company, presently owned by Capital Cities/ABC. Reported in *Newsweek*, this 72 million dollar deal blesses Nelson with nine of the top ten selling Christian books on the

market and recording contracts with Amy Grant and gospel star Sandi Patti. Already controlling 30% of the estimated \$150 million a year Bible market, Thomas Nelson is looking forward to even more business with the Good Book.

See — "He Reaps What He Sows" in *Newsweek*, October 26, 1992

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**Update on the EC**  
by **Sandy Beehler**  
(Cornell University)

The European Community Summit in Edinburgh on December 11-12 faces some formidable challenges. French intransigence on the GATT talks is placing strain on its alliance with Germany. Germany's inability to raise taxes — thus keeping interest rates high — has

deepened the European recession that has led to the EC's current problems. A British postponement of ratification of the Maastricht Treaty is also creating uncertainty in the Community.

See — *The Economist*, November 7-13, 1992, p. 51.

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## Copper Wire Wins the Gold

by Rachel Miller  
(University of Kansas)

Integrated Services Digital Network (ISDN), a technology developed by Bell Labs in the 1970s to speed up transmission of digitized information, failed for so long to deliver on its potential that some derided it as "it still does nothing", but its time may finally be here. ISDN enables copper wires to carry digitized data at up to 1.5 million bits per second. Its spread was held back after the 1984 breakup of AT&T because the regional operating companies built proprietary versions, but is now being standardized.

ISDN is intended to grow into a national network connecting local carriers, long distance companies, equipment manufacturers, and customers for such uses as telecommuting, video conferencing, customer service call handling, telephone/work station integration, image communications, and high-speed file exchange. ISDN may soon mean "I See Dollars Now".

See — "The Copper Wire Gets Fatter" by David C. Churbuck in *Forbes*, vol. 150 (8) (October 12, 1992), pp. 140-141.

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## Going for the Cites

by Rick Heldrich  
(College of Charleston)

Here is some more evidence for the value of citation rate as a means of measuring peer appreciation for scientific work. The year's chemistry Nobel Prize winner, Dr. Marcus of the California Institute of Technology, got his award for work on mechanistic aspects of electron transfer processes. His crucial paper has been cited more than 1,100 times, but only 5 times in 1957, one year after it appeared, with 120 in 1991. It took awhile, but the paper caught on. His last paper on the topic, published in the same journal, *The Journal of Chemical Physics*, in 1965 has over 1,000 citations. Of

his more recent work, 1984-90, his citation rate earns him a 49th ranking among chemists. Other Nobelists also fare well in citation rates. The Medicine prize goes to Krebs & Fischer, who collaborate on protein phosphorylation studies. Krebs & Fischer have been cited over 550 times for one paper. A 1979 review by Krebs on the field was cited over 1,500 times.

See — "Citation Records Underscore Nobel Winners' Long-Standing Influence on Lab Research" by Scott Veggeberg in *The Scientist*, Dec. 7, 1992, vol. 6 #24, pp. 1,5.

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## Dial-A-Video

by Sarah Tusa  
(Lamar University)

Dial-up video is in the making at Bell Atlantic Corporation. The concept is to transmit video signals over "twisted pair" wiring used for local telephone service. The technology that allows this service is called Asymmetric Digital Subscriber Line (ADSL). ADSL pushes the signal rate up from 3,500 cycles per second to 500,000 for distances of up to 3.5 miles. An amplifier box in the receiver's home rescues the incoming signals from fading away. Requisite for this task, but not yet developed, is a "video server". The

function of this device will be to store movies in digital form in jukebox fashion. This technology faces certain limitations such as subcable picture quality and limited (3.5 miles) reach. Still, a number of telecommunication companies are experimenting with "video-on-command". It appears equally possible at this point to see either partnership or rivalry develop between the phone and cable industries over ring-up video.

See — *Business Week*, No. 3293 (November 16, 1992), p. 86.

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## The Moscow Express

by Sandy Beehler  
(Cornell University)

A package going from one postal district in London to another travels cheaper by way of Moscow rather than direct under the British postal system. A practice called "ABA remailing" exploits

anomalies in the international postal payment system to avoid high costs of domestic postage.

See — *The Economist*, November 7-13, 1992, p. 73

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## Shake Up in Communications

by Sandy Beehler  
(Cornell University)

"Three big changes are set to shake up America's telecoms market almost as much as the 1984 break-up of AT&T." AT&T is moving into cellular telephones, giving it access to 40% of America's population and allowing it to connect customers directly to its long-distance lines. MCI also announced plans to launch a new wireless network, offering "personal communications system" (PCS) directly to consumers. All three long-distance companies are seeking collaboration with

the cable-television industry to provide video and data services through such networks. The Baby Bells could be seriously hurt by competition from these new developments. The election of Clinton and Gore, with their commitment to better telecommunications, may mean that the Baby Bells' monopolies will be opened to competition, forcing an unbundling of services and fairer pricing for customers.

See — *The Economist*, November 14-20, 1992, p. 75.





## **The Interactive Revolution, by Rosann Bazirjian (Syracuse University)**

This article discusses the future in a world of interactive media; a term the author indicates is shorthand for revolution. Within 3-4 years, we are informed that anything that can be turned into bits of digital code, will be zipping in and out of our homes and offices. The future makes services such as today's Prodigy and CompuService seem primitive. This "two-way communication with the world" has industries such as telecommunications, computing, broadcast media and consumer electronics negotiating for positions in the interactive digital future. This article indicates that the coaxial links of cable television companies is the most suited for this new technology, even more so than telephone wires. Were these

two industries to team up, the road to a future world of interactive media would be drastically shorter. "A network combining fiber optics and coaxial cable could carry a gigabit of information per second - a billion digital bits, the equivalent of 30,000 single-spaced typewritten pages". This is also approximately 500 times the capacity of a phone line. It is suggested that this new generation of information technology coming into our homes will dramatically alter our lives, as we order airline tickets, hear presidential campaign statements and order merchandise from catalogs without leaving home.

**See —** "Hot New PC Services" in *Fortune* November 2, 1992 vol. 126 (10), pages 108-114.

## **No News is Good News by Sandy Beehler (Cornell University)**

Since 1990 newspapers in America, Western Europe and Japan have suffered the worst slump in 50 years. Newspapers' two sources of revenue — circulation and advertising — have dropped dramatically. Many papers have been forced to close down. Firms are spending less on advertising and switching to other media. TV news, VCRs and video games have contributed to declining reader interest. However, newspapers may maintain a place in popular media. Local firms still depend largely on local newspapers to reach their customers, and many papers are seeking to broaden

their readership by changing content and design to appeal to younger readers. Newspapers still face the challenge of the growing information-services business and the possibility of news being delivered by computer screens and faxes in the future. But the author sees a role for newspapers — collecting and analyzing information for others. Already Bell South has set up joint ventures with newspapers to develop news services.

**See —** *The Economist*, October 31-November 6, 1992, pp. 67-68.

## **Software Companies Not Soft on Litigation by Katina Strauch (College of Charleston)**

This article was pointed out by Joyce Ogburn (Yale University). And here's a proprietary battle that is worthy of its own soap opera. Copyright and property rights of researchers to their products — megacorps and big universities squaring off — are right in the middle of the whole messy mess (AKA lawsuits). It seems that AT&T and UC Berkeley, once married and living in harmony, are in the middle of disputes over UNIX and NET2, operating systems. UNIX was developed by AT&T and is used extensively by researchers. It

requires a "sophisticated workstation." NET2 is an operating system, it seems, derived by researchers "tinkering" with UNIX and can be used on "some types of personal computers". Obviously, there's money in there somewhere which is why both parties want the product. So, it's off to the courts.

**See —** "UC Berkeley Embroiled in Computer Software Lawsuit," by John Travis in *Science* for 15 January, 1993, pages 304-305.

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